



Darrell D. Slone, Director, Counterintelligence
Darrell.d.slone@nasa.gov

TYPES OF ADVISORIES

Bulletin

Describes current developments or general trends regarding threats of terrorism.

Elevated Alert

Warns of a credible terrorism threat against the United States.

Imminent Alert

Warns of a credible, specific and impending terrorism threat against the United States.

**Office of Protective
Services**

Jan 2020 DHS Bulletin

NASA CI/CT MONTHLY NEWS UPDATE – January 2021

This monthly newsletter is published to inform NASA personnel of significant issues related to counterintelligence, counterterrorism, and counterintelligence cyber matters. To learn more about CI/CT awareness, or to schedule a CI/CT presentation, please contact the CI point of contact located on the last page.

Significant Counterterrorism (CT) Issues:

2020 APPEARS TO BE A GOOD YEAR FOR COUNTERTERRORISM



Although many Americans are eager to put this year behind them, 2020 also had some surprising bright spots. So far, there have been no foreign jihadist attacks on U.S. soil, and despite the grim headlines, the actual number of deaths from white supremacists and other domestic terrorists is small.

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/12/24/2020-appears-to-be-a-good-year-for-counterterrorism/>

THE U.S. AND THE AFTERMATH OF ISIS

Recently, the Department of Homeland Security cautioned that the main threats to U.S. interests were overseas. “These groups can adapt quickly and resurge, and terrorists overseas will continue to probe for vulnerabilities in U.S. immigration and border security programs.”

<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/us-and-aftermath-isis>



REPORTS OF AL-QAEDA'S DEMISE ARE GREATLY EXAGGERATED



If Zawahiri is dead, it will unquestionably be a blow to al-Qaeda from a logistical perspective, especially given the terrorist leader's penchant for managing relationships between the core and its affiliates. However, the number of fighters under arms for al-Qaeda is estimated at upwards of 40,000 jihadists.

<https://www.newsweek.com/reports-al-qaedas-demise-are-greatly-exaggerated-opinion-1552904>

Significant Counterintelligence Issues:

TECH GIANTS ARE GIVING CHINA A VITAL EDGE IN ESPIONAGE

The embrace between China's intelligence services and Chinese businesses has gotten tighter, U.S. officials say. In 2017, under Xi's intensifying authoritarianism, Beijing promulgated a new national intelligence law that compels Chinese businesses to work with Chinese intelligence and security agencies whenever they are requested to do so.

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/12/23/china-tech-giants-process-stolen-data-spy-agencies/>





CHINA SUSPECTED OF SPYING ON AMERICANS VIA CARIBBEAN PHONE LINES



China appears to have used mobile phone networks in the Caribbean to surveil US mobile phone subscribers as part of its espionage campaign against Americans, according to a mobile network security expert who has analyzed sensitive signals data. The findings paint an alarming picture of how China has allegedly exploited decades-old vulnerabilities in the global telecommunications network to route “active” surveillance attacks through telecom operators.

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/dec/15/revealed-china-suspected-of-spying-on-americans-via-caribbean-phone-networks>

CHINA'S EXTENSIVE 'HONEY TRAP' SPY NETWORK NATIONWIDE

While several current and former intelligence and security officials and experts interviewed by Fox News said that it was impossible to put a number on just how many honey trap scenarios might be in motion at present, one former defense and intelligence operative noted that it could be well into the hundreds – if not thousands.



<https://www.foxnews.com/politics/how-china-has-built-its-extensive-honey-trap-spy-network>

Analyst Notes – Items to Watch:

2020 has seen some significant victories against terrorism worldwide, with both ISIS and Al-Qaeda leaders being eliminated by targeted strikes. However, both groups continue to persevere, even expanding in “ungoverned areas” of Africa and the Middle East. Despite the loss of key personnel and experienced leaders, their planning and operations continue. AQIM, AQAP and other Al-Qaeda affiliated groups continue to fight for influence across the Middle East and South East Asia. Extensive Chinese espionage operations in the United States are being uncovered, with “traditional espionage” utilizing spies, continue at a frantic pace. China continues to have great success in using “honey pot” entrapment operations across the United States and Europe. The NASA CI/CT division continues to monitor these threats and any others that have the potential to harm NASA or its equities.

NASA CI Offices:

Ames Research Center: Christopher Knoth, (650) 604-2250
Armstrong Flight Research Center: Frank Sutton, (661) 276-7476
Glenn Research Center: George Crawford, (216) 433-8458
Goddard Space Flight Center: Christian Breil, (301) 286-1533
Jet Propulsion Laboratory: John J. O'Malley, (818) 354-7828
Johnson Space Center: Tony Dietsch, (281) 483-7921
Kennedy Space Center: Ron Storey, (321) 867-2568
Langley Research Center: Benjamin Marchione, (757) 864-3403
Marshall Space Flight Center: Ron Smith, (256) 544-7808
NASA Headquarters: Art Payton, (202) 358-4645
Stennis Space Center: David Malcom, (228) 688-1683
NASA Headquarters Cyber: Stefan Morgan, (202) 358-1294